



# **FAYETTEVILLE**

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

### **2017 ADULT SOFTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS**



#### **LEAGUE DISCLAIMERS**

- All City of Fayetteville park regulations will be enforced during league play. Rules are posted at park entrances. No alcohol containers allowed in city parks. All dogs must be leashed at all times.
  - (City Ordinance 97.081(b) states, "No person in a park shall bring into or consume alcoholic beverages within a city park, nor shall any person enter a park when under the influence of intoxicating beverages.")
  - The umpire may declare an immediate forfeit for any team where he or she sees the team member(s) drinking during the game. There will be no appeals; the forfeit will stand.
- Be aware that the City of Fayetteville does not provide insurance for the participants of our adult softball leagues. Each player as a result of participation in the leagues assumes all liability and risk of injury. It is strongly suggested that each player obtain medical and liability insurance prior to participating in the league. Team insurance policies are available through the USSSA.
- The Fayetteville Parks & Recreation Department and the Adult Softball Advisory Board (ASAB) strive to ensure that a high level of sportsmanship is maintained in the program. The league shall enforce a zero-tolerance policy with regards to negative conduct before, during or after league games.
  - Please see rule **IX. BEHAVIOR** for all player suspension details.
- All participants in this adult softball program are required to read the Fayetteville Parks and Recreation rules and regulations that pertain to our league.
  - It is the responsibility of the captain/manager of each team to ensure their players are well educated with the league rules and expectations.
- Only Players, Managers or Coaches listed on the team roster will be allowed in the team bench area or on the field of play. **ABSOLUTELY NO CHILDREN** are allowed on the field of play including dugout area. USSSA National Ruling as of 2015.
- All players listed on the team roster are eligible to participate in the league playoffs and the district/state tournaments, regardless of the number (if any) of regular season games they play. Please note that during the playoffs at least one team per playoff division may be randomly selected to show player eligibility prior to playing. Teams that are unable to prove their team's eligibility will forfeit, and they will be dropped from the playoffs. All players listed on the final team roster are eligible for the post-season USSSA district or state tournament play.
- The decision to cancel a game will be made by 3:30PM. Call the City of Fayetteville Parks and Recreation Inclement Weather Hotline at 479-443-PARK (7275) for current information. If there isn't a message on the recorder by 3:30PM, assume the games are on.



**Connect with FPR**

<http://facebook.com/fayparksandrec>

<http://twitter.com/fayparksandrec>

<http://instagram.com/fayettevilleparksandrec>

## I. CLASSIFICATIONS

- A. Teams may determine their classifications, however the program manager reserves the right to make changes to any team classification. All league/tournament winners are subject to play an automatic higher classification for the next participating season and in some cases league tournaments.
  - B. All classifications mentioned below will be offered each year; however, some classifications may not be offered every season (spring, summer, and fall). COED leagues are available for each classification. Homerun limits per classification are included below.
- **WEST ONE** – Teams with less than one year experience, one year equals three playing seasons (i.e. spring, summer, and fall). Strictly recreational, no USSSA travel players.
    - Homerun Limit - 1
  - **WEST** – Teams with little or no experience playing together and a combination of experienced and inexperienced players. Offensive and defensive skills vary among teammates. Strictly recreational, no USSSA travel players.
    - Homerun Limit - 1
  - **EAST** – Teams with experience playing together as well as individual experience. Effective offensive and defensive skills required with 1-2 power hitters (Some classified E level players).
    - Homerun Limit - 2
  - **SOUTH** – Teams with experience playing together as well as individual experience. Very good offensive and defensive skills required with some home-run power (Mostly classified D and E level players).
    - Homerun Limit - 3
  - **NORTH** – Teams with participants who are very talented and experienced softball players. Superior offensive and defensive skills required with good home-run power. Experience playing together as a team helpful, but not essential at this level (Classified C or above, D, and E level players).
    - Homerun limit – 5
  - **WOMEN’S** – Mix of teams with a lot, little, or no experience playing together and a combination of experienced and inexperienced players. Very recreational and fun league.
    - Homerun Limit – 1
  - **INCREDIBALL** – Very recreational & welcomes all! Some teams with little or no experience playing together and a combination of experienced and inexperienced players. Played with a 12 inch rag-ball.
    - Homerun Limit – 1

## II. STANDINGS

- A. The program manager will keep league standings. They can be viewed at [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com).
- B. Final standings are based on USSSA National format:
  - 1. Winning Percentage
  - 2. Win-Loss Record
  - 3. Tied teams’ (vs. each other) Winning Percentage
  - 4. Average Runs Allowed then Average Run Differential if still tied.

## III. GAME TIME LIMITS

- A. Each game will consist of a fifty (50) minute time limit or seven (7) innings, whichever comes first.
  - 1. The clock will start on the first warm-up pitch made by the Home Team.
  - 2. If time expires before the last out of an inning is made, no new inning will begin.
  - 3. If the last out of an inning is made before time expires, the game will go into another inning.

4. The first game of the evening will be allowed a five (5) minute grace period, which will be taken off of the game time. All other games will not receive a grace period.
- B. Mercy Rule: If the criteria mentioned below is met during a game, the game will be called.
  1. Fifteen (15) runs after three (3) innings.
  2. Twelve (12) runs after four (4) innings.
  3. Ten (10) runs after five (5) innings.
- C. If teams are tied at the end of the time limit or seven (7) innings, the game will follow the One-Pitch format until the tie is broken by the end of an inning.
  1. One-Pitch: Each batter will receive one (1) pitch. If the pitch is ruled as a BALL, the batter will take his or her base. If the pitch is ruled as a STRIKE, the batter will be called OUT.
- D. In the event of a forfeit, the official score will be recorded as 7-0.
- E. A game stopped by an umpire is complete if four (4) innings are completed (3 ½ if home team has the lead).
  1. If a regulation game is called and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond four (4) innings, the score will revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half inning if the home team leads but back no further than the fourth (4th) inning. (i.e., game is stopped top of the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) inning, home team did not bat the official score will revert back to the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) inning)

#### IV. TEAM ROSTERS & BATTING LINE-UP

- A. All teams shall have a maximum of twenty (20) players, including the manager, and a minimum of ten (10) players listed on the roster.
  1. All players must be at least sixteen (16) years of age to be eligible to play, but if a player under the age of eighteen (18) wishes to participate, they must fill out an eighteen and under (18U) waiver beforehand, which requires a signature by a parent or guardian.
  2. Each player's name, birth date, and preferred email address for contact must be on the team roster in order for the player to be eligible to play.
- B. Teams must exchange rosters before or during the Plate meeting with the umpire(s).
- C. Rosters are due before the first game of the season, and can be managed throughout the season until rosters are frozen.
  1. Teams who fail to turn in their roster before the first game run the risk of forfeiting their first game and may be suspended from the league.
  2. Changes to the roster will be allowed up until the roster deadline. Changes to the roster can be done online, in person before the game, or by email. Phone-in roster changes will not be accepted.
  3. Managers or players who falsify any information on the roster may be suspended from softball leagues at the discretion of the Adult Softball Advisory Board (ASAB).
  4. Players may not play on two teams in the same division unless playing in an open division. If players have been playing for two or more teams, they must pick one to play with throughout the tournament.
  5. No players on the USSSA State D and above classification list may play in EAST or WEST leagues. Exceptions for COED leagues. The Player Classification list may be located on our website at [www.fayetteville-ar.gov/adultsoftball](http://www.fayetteville-ar.gov/adultsoftball).
- D. **Batting line-up** length may be eight (8) to twelve (12). Any drop in the original batting line-up length may result in an automatic out. There is no automatic forfeiture unless a team drops from eight (8) to seven (7) players. Teams must announce their batting line-up length to the opposing team and umpire at the beginning of the game. The players listed in the batting line-up (and only those players) may play the ten (10) defensive positions.

1. If a team fails to have a minimum of eight (8) players present at the fields, that team will be forced to forfeit. Teams may use the field during their allotted time to practice/scrimmage.
  2. When a continuous line-up drops a player it is an automatic out.
  3. A team can play with eight (8) players and not be penalized, and can add to the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) spot. But once that team adds the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) player, an out will be enforced in the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) spot.
  4. No penalty will be enforced if a player leaves due to an injury.
- E. For COED: Teams must have an equal number of men and women on their line-up, or have more women than men. Under no circumstances will a team be allowed to play if they have more men than women. There are no restrictions where men and women may position themselves on defense, as long as there are an equal number of men and women or there are more women than men.
1. The batting line-up for COED teams must go by the following format: male, female, male, female, etc. Two (2) men will NEVER be allowed to bat back-to-back, but it is ACCEPTABLE for two (2) women to bat back-to-back.

## V. EQUIPMENT

- A. Players' Attire
1. Metal cleats are NOT allowed in any league game.
  2. Matching colored uniforms are recommended. For post-season play, USSSA requires matching colored shirts.
  3. Facemasks for pitchers are highly encouraged.
- B. Softballs
1. Official softball for Men will be the YELLOW Worth Extreme (Blue Stamp)
  2. Official softball for Women will be the YELLOW Worth Classic W (Blue Stamp)
- C. Bases
1. Saf-T-Slide bases will be used in league play. (Orange Safety Bag)
- D. Bats
1. All bats used in league play must have all USSSA and BPF markings (USSSA Stamp), must be permanent and not applied as a decal or anything easily removed.
  2. An illegal bat is one that does not meet the requirements/specifications of Rule 2, Section 2 in the USSSA Rulebook. Effect: The penalty for using an altered or illegal bat is as follows: If the batter hits the ball with an altered or illegal bat, the ball is dead, the batter is out, ejected from the game and/or tournament, and immediately reported to the State Director for consideration of Disbarment proceedings.
  3. To determine if a bat you currently own or one you are considering buying meets the minimum standards, please find it on the legal bat list posted on the USSSA website: <http://www.ussa.com/ussa/ussageneral/LegalBats.asp>. There is no illegal bat list available for distribution.
- E. No Warning Tracks
1. Warning tracks are NOT set up at either Fayetteville softball facility. Please make sure players are aware of this and use caution on the field.
- F. Pitching Screens
1. Pitching screens are available at both Fayetteville softball complex locations.
  2. Use of these pitching screens are optional but highly encouraged. If a pitcher decides not to use the pitching screen, he or she will be required to wear a facemask. If a facemask is not available, the pitcher will be required to use the pitching screen. No exceptions.
  3. Placement of the screens must meet the following criteria:
    - a. One (1) to four (4) feet in front of the pitching rubber.
    - b. No more than six (6) inches to the left or right of the pitching rubber.

- c. Pitchers are free to adjust the screen between each half inning, but the adjustments must meet the aforementioned criteria.
4. Pitching screens are considered part of the field. If a batted ball strikes the pitching screen, it will be ruled as a FOUL. If a thrown ball strikes the pitching screen, it is still considered a LIVE ball. Under no circumstances will a player be allowed to knock over the pitching screen. Doing so will result in a DEAD ball, and all offensive players will advance one (1) base.

## **VI. THE FIELD**

- A. Pitching Rubber
  1. The pitching rubber will be set at fifty (50) feet.
- B. Bases
  1. Bases will be set at seventy (70) feet.
- C. Pitcher's Arc
  1. An arc set at twenty-five (25) feet from Home Plate that stretches from the first (1<sup>st</sup>) baseline to the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) baseline will be chalked on the field.
  2. Pitchers will not be allowed to field a ball until it has crossed over this arc. Doing so will result in a DEAD ball, and all offensive players will advance one (1) base.
- D. Softball Complexes
  1. Gary Hampton has three-hundred (300) foot fences.
  2. Lake Fayetteville has two-hundred seventy-five (275) foot fences.
- E. Bench/Dugout Rules
  1. Only Players, Managers or Coaches listed on the team roster will be allowed in the team bench area or on the field of play. ABSOLUTELY NO CHILDREN are allowed on the field of play including dugouts area. USSSA National Ruling as of 2015.
  2. Dugout Rule: OFFENSE & DEFENSE - There will be no more than two (2) players (on-deck/in-the hole) outside of the dugout or on the field of play at one time for Offense and does not apply to the base coaches. While on Defense, you may not have any player outside the dugout area. It is the managers or coaches responsibility to ensure every player, coach, or manager stays inside the dugout area during the game. You will receive an explanation of this rule during the Pre-Game Managers Meeting and then YOU WILL GET ONE (1) ADDITIONAL WARNING. After the first warning during the game, the manager or coach will be ejected from the field of play. If the DUGOUT RULE continues to be a problem, the player(s), coach(s), or manager(s) outside the dugout (with the exception of the "on-deck" and "in-the-hole") will be ejected from the remainder of the game.

## **VII. PLAYING RULES**

- A. Pitching
  1. The pitcher may pitch from the Pitching Plate or from the Pitching Area, an area the width of the plate and up to six (6) feet behind the pitcher's plate. The pitcher shall take a position with his or her pivot foot firmly on the ground and in contact with the pitching plate or area when the pitched ball is released.
  2. After assuming the pitching position, the pitcher must present the ball in FRONT OF HIS BODY (for at least 1 second) before starting the delivery.
  3. When a pitching screen is used, the pitcher must position themselves behind the screen as soon as the ball is released from his or her hand. Failure to do so will result in a DEAD ball, and the offensive player at bat will advance one (1) base.
- B. Pitch Count
  1. Each batter will start with a one (1) ball, one (1) strike count, with NO courtesy foul.



2. When a batter receives a count of three (3) strikes, he or she will be ruled OUT, and when a batter receives a count of four (4) balls, he or she will take their base.
- C. Double-wide first bases will be used for all leagues.
1. Whenever a play is being made on the batter/runner, the batter/runner MUST use the orange base and the defense must use the white base. The batter/runner must use the orange base on the first attempt at first base; however, should he/she reach and go beyond first base, he/she must return to the white base. On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield when there is no play being made at the doublewide first base, the runner may touch the white base. Should the batter/runner round the base on a hit to the infield or outfield, he must return to the white base. When tagging up on a fly ball, the white base must be used. A batted ball hitting the white base is declared fair and a batted ball hitting the orange base is declared foul. Note: If the correct base is missed, it is an appealed out situation.
- D. Base Running
1. On a caught fly ball, player must be touching the base they started on before advancing to the next base. Failure to do so will result in an OUT upon the defense tagging the base with the ball.
  2. For COED: When a male player is walked, he will advance to second (2<sup>nd</sup>) base, and the female following in the batting line-up will have the option to take first (1<sup>st</sup>) base or step up to Home Plate to bat.
  3. Courtesy Runner: One (1) courtesy runner will be allowed per team per inning. If the courtesy runner is up to bat while on base, he or she will be ruled OUT.
    - a. For COED: Courtesy runners may only sub in for someone of their respective gender. (i.e., male for male & female for female)
- E. Infield Fly Rule
1. The infield fly rule will be enforced when the following criteria is met:
    - a. There must be runners on first and second base (or first, second, and third base).
    - b. There must be fewer than two (2) outs.
    - c. A batter must hit a fly ball into fair territory that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.
    - d. The umpire must call, "Infield fly!" or, "Infield fly, batter out!"
    - e. If the umpire does not call either of these, then the ball is live as normal.

## **VIII. PROTESTS**

### **A. USSSA Rule**

1. Managers can only protest rule interpretations. Managers cannot protest judgment calls.

### **B. Procedure**

1. See USSSA rulebook, Rule 4, Section 11 (eleven) to determine whether a call is eligible for protest and how to protest. Any protest not done accordingly will be nullified. Umpires may not instruct teams on how to file a protest.
2. Rule interpretation protests must be received by the program manager, in writing, within 2 working days after the scheduled game. Failure to do so makes the protest "null and void".
3. Managers may initiate "player eligibility" checks of opposing teams before the third inning of play. The designated manager must report roster check to the game umpire. The park staff will check the entire rosters of both teams, must teams must have ID's in hand before roster check. If roster verification cannot be done immediately, the game will continue under eligibility protest. The umpire must report the protest to the league staff member immediately by obtaining the protest. If the protest is upheld the game will be declared a forfeit and the next game will begin.

### **C. Ruling**

1. Any player that is ruled to be ineligible will be suspended for a minimum of one game.

For more information, please contact Recreation Program Manager Mark May at [mmay@fayetteville-ar.gov](mailto:mmay@fayetteville-ar.gov) or 479-718-7681.

## **IX. BEHAVIOR**

- A. Unsportsmanlike Conduct - The Fayetteville Parks & Recreation Department and the Adult Softball Advisory Board (ASAB) strive to ensure that a high level of sportsmanship is maintained in the program. The league shall enforce a zero-tolerance policy with regards to negative conduct before, during or after league games.
  - 1. Unsportsmanlike Conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following; profanity, rowdy or disruptive behavior, patronizing, arguing mischief, tantrum behavior, verbal abuse, fighting, hitting, kicking, or any other type of physical contact.
- B. Any player, coach, manager, or spectator exhibiting unsportsmanlike behavior could be subject to the following suspension measures;
  - 1. Game suspension for the remainder of the current game plus the next two games.
  - 2. The suspended player's name will be placed on probation for one year in all FPR adult leagues.
  - 3. Any player, coach, manager or spectator ejected a second time during a 365 day period for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be prohibited from participating in the FPR adult leagues for at least one calendar year.
  - 4. Suspended indefinitely from all adult leagues, pending review of the incident by the ASAB and the program manager.
    - a. A suspended person may or may not be allowed at any site where league games are in progress at the discretion of the program manager.
    - b. Violating the suspension will result in forwarding the incident to the USSSA or state for further sanctions against the player and/or team.
- C. An individual retains the right of a hearing when the action to be taken is expulsion from participation in the league:
  - 1. The player will provide a written explanation of the situation that resulted in his/her ejection from the game.
  - 2. An appeal letter along with must be received within 7 days of being notified of the expulsion to the program manager. Failure to do so will result in a forfeiture of one's right to appeal.
  - 3. Invited to attend the hearing will be: the player, his/her manager, the program manager, ASAB and the assigned official.
  - 4. Additionally, a suspended player must be present at the next scheduled ASAB meeting to review his/her case. Failure to attend this meeting will result in a forfeiture of one's right to appeal.
  - 5. A minimum of five (5) ASAB members must be present at a review meeting.
  - 6. A majority vote of active/present members is necessary to overturn a suspension/expulsion.
- D. Umpires
  - 1. Umpires are required to enforce the rules set by the league with absolute authority. Umpires will use a "ZERO TOLERANCE" mentality when enforcing league rules.
  - 2. Umpires reserve the right to "call the foul line", when the applied foul line is done so improperly or is not visible.
  - 3. Any softball personnel who are verbally abusive or threatening to an umpire will be ejected.
  - 4. Any physical assault on an umpire will result, at minimum, in an immediate 12-month suspension, and the violation will be reported to the state sanctioning officials for additional disciplinary action.
  - 5. Umpires are required to obtain team and player names involved in any incident. Refusal by a player to give proper names of other players or refusal by a player to give

information regarding himself or herself will result in an immediate suspension, plus the game becomes an immediate forfeit.

6. Umpires have the authority to eject any player who is drinking alcoholic beverages inside the fenced area.
7. Umpires have authority to refuse to allow a player on the field or to enter the game if the player is or appears to be intoxicated, or if there is any possibility that the player could cause injury or harm to themselves or other players.
8. Umpires have the authority to remove any player smoking on the bench or playing areas. Smoking is permitted outside the fenced area only. Smokers are requested to dispose of their cigarettes and cigars properly.
9. Umpires have the authority to eject any player who delays play by repeatedly leaving the area.

#### E. Drinking Rule

1. Players are not allowed to drink during the game. No beer is allowed on the playing field or bench area (City Ordinance 97.081(b) states, "No person in a park shall bring into or consume alcoholic beverages within a city park, nor shall any person enter a park when under the influence of intoxicating beverages.") The umpire may declare an immediate forfeit for any team where he/she sees the team member(s) drinking during the game. There will be no appeals; the forfeit will stand.

### X. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

#### A. Blood Rule

1. A player, manager/coach or umpire who is bleeding or has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until the bleeding is stopped and the wound covered. If treatment can be administered in a reasonable amount of time the individual would not have to leave the game. The length of time that is considered reasonable is in the umpire's judgment. If excessive time is involved, the re-entry rule would apply to players. If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform or if a bandage becomes blood soaked, in the judgment of the umpire, the uniform/bandage must be changed before the individual may participate.

#### B. Insurance

1. Be aware that there are inherent risks to playing the game of softball. Injuries may occur due to collisions with other players being struck by a ball or a bat, sliding into a base, running into a fence, etc. Be aware that the City of Fayetteville does not provide insurance for the participants of our adult softball leagues. Each player as a result of participation in the leagues assumes all liability and risk of injury. It is strongly suggested that each player obtain medical and liability insurance prior to participating in the league. Team insurance policies are available through the USSSA. All pitchers are highly recommended to wear a facemask or use a pitching screen for all leagues.

### XI. WEATHER POLICY

#### A. To determine

1. The decision to cancel a game will be made by 3:30PM. Call the Parks and Recreation Department's Information Line at 479-443-PARK (7275) for current information. If there is not a message on the recorder by 3:30PM assume the games are on.

#### B. At the Field

1. ALL umpires will meet and discuss the weather situation. In the event that a decision is made to suspend games, all managers and umpires will wait for 15 minutes and meet back to discuss whether to cancel games or resume games.



2. If severe weather develops, all patrons, staff, and umpires should seek shelter immediately. Umpires or parks personnel will attempt to notify everyone as soon as possible of inclement weather.
  3. All team managers are allowed to inform the umpire that they do not feel comfortable playing in the current conditions without any penalty towards them or their team. If you choose to suspend play, the game will be stopped and resume per Rule XI.
- C. Storm Warning Sirens
1. Games are immediately suspended when the sirens sounds for dangerous weather.
- D. Makeup Games
1. Rainouts will be rescheduled on regular game nights when possible, Friday, Saturday, or Sunday evenings if absolutely necessary.

## **XII. REFERENCE**

- A. The league will follow all rules set forth in the 2016 USSSA rule book, unless otherwise specified in this list of league rules. Link to the USSSA Rule Book:  
<http://www.ussa.com/slowpitch/Announcements/#/?gdSport=17&AA=438>

FAYETTEVILLE PARKS & RECREATION  
2017 ADULT SOFTBALL PROGRAM  
GENERAL INFO



New Mark

## USSSA Softball Bat Marks for 2017 Season

Effective January 1, 2013

Have the new permanent<sup>1</sup> USSSA Mark on its  
taper OR Be a Wood Bat



**ALL of the above must be manufactured by an approved USSSA Bat Licensee**

<sup>1</sup> USSSA marks and other graphics of the bat must be applied permanently and must be applied by the USSSA licensed manufacturer. No stickers or decals are allowed and no one may add graphics to a bat once manufactured. Use of a bat with graphics not applied by the manufacturer will be use of an altered bat and subject to suspension under the USSSA Altered Bat rules. In addition to being violation of the USSSA Altered Bat rules, any use, creation or application of a USSSA mark without written permission of USSSA is a violation of Federal Trademark law and may result in prosecution by USSSA. If you have any concern about the person selling or providing you a bat, do not accept the bat, because you will be held responsible for any bat you bring into or use in a USSSA facility.

## Official League Softballs for the 2017 Season



Worth 12" Super Gold  
Dot Extreme Classic  
M USSSA SP Softballs



Worth 11" USSSA  
Green Dot Classic  
W USSSA SP Softball

For a full list of vendor/locations to purchase balls and bats. Please send email to [mmay@fayetteville-ar.gov](mailto:mmay@fayetteville-ar.gov). League balls will be available for purchase onsite at the concession stands located in both ballparks.

For more information, please contact Recreation Program Manager Mark May at [mmay@fayetteville-ar.gov](mailto:mmay@fayetteville-ar.gov) or 479-718-7681.

